

Strong Leadership

...a clear course

✓ One Year Later

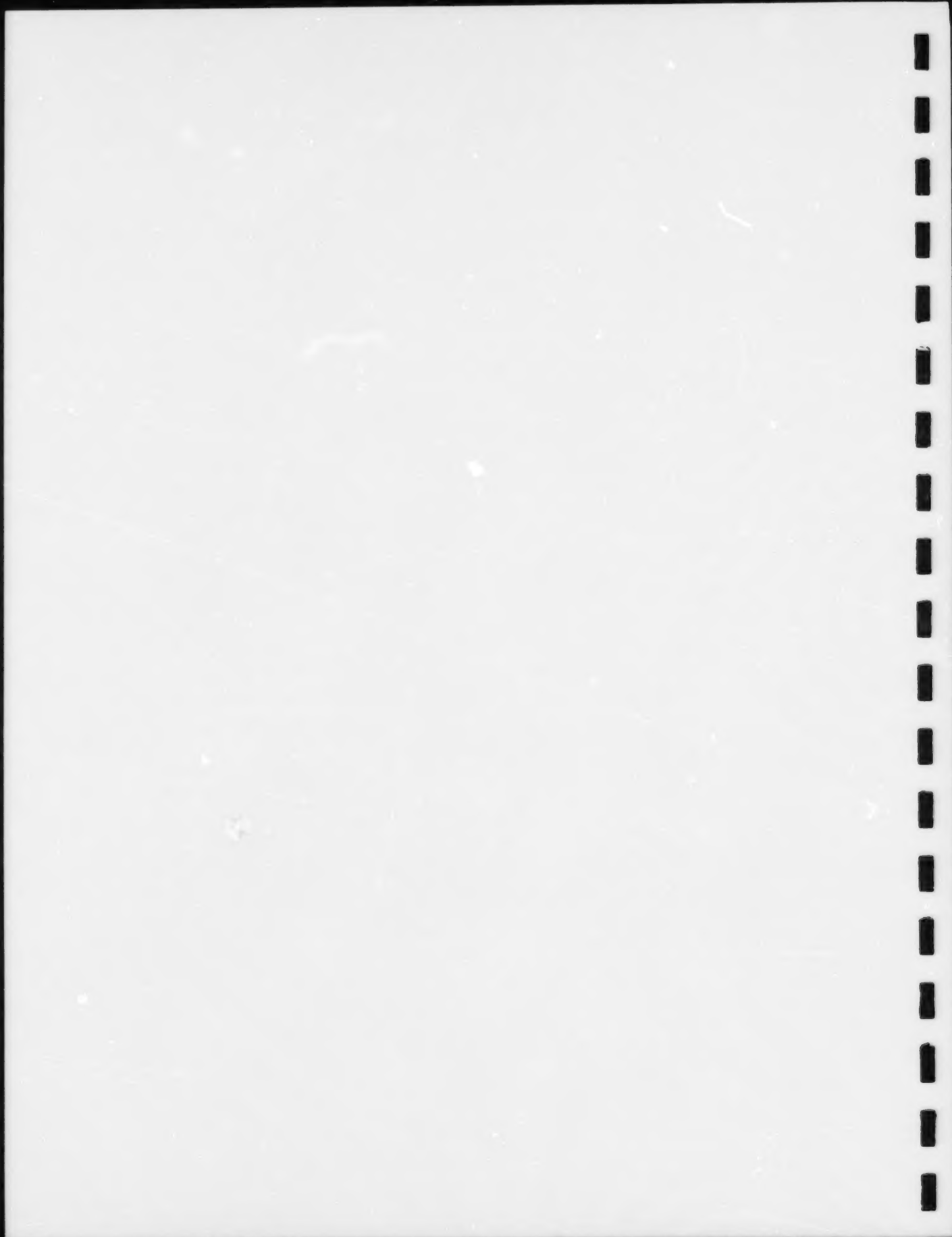




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Introduction

Since being sworn in on August 16, 1999, Premier John Hamm and the Nova Scotia government have taken an aggressive approach in implementing the *Strong Leadership ... a clear course* plan that was presented to Nova Scotians in the summer of 1999.

The following is a review of the commitments and actions since the new government assumed office and started following a clear course to build a better province for Nova Scotians. While this is an extensive outline of the commitments kept by John Hamm and the government, action to complete numerous other commitments is also under way.

The government will continue to provide Nova Scotians with a status report on its four-year plan throughout its mandate. Page numbers noted throughout this paper refer to the original *Strong Leadership ... a clear course* document.

Building a Healthier Province

"Building a responsive, outcome-based and efficient health care system is the ... most urgent priority." (*Strong Leadership ... a clear course*, p. 6)

Commitment

Assume the existing debt of the Non-Designated Hospitals and the Regional Hospital Boards. (p. 8)

Action

- ✓ Province assumed operating deficits and debts in October 1999 budget.

Commitment

Eliminate Regional Health Boards. The new structure will include the catchment areas of the nine regional hospitals. It will support, rather than impede, devolution of responsibility to communities over health care decision-making. (pp. 3 and 8)

Action

- ✓ On October 21, Health Minister Jamie Muir announced the transfer of regional health board governance from Regional Health Boards to the Department of Health to provide stability to the health care system.
- ✓ On November 5, Health Minister Jamie Muir released a transition plan to restructure the province's health care system into one that is more community-responsive and based on nine District Health Authorities.
- ✓ District Health Authorities Act passed during spring 2000 session.

Commitment

Legislate the authority of Community Health Boards to identify and plan programs to meet local priorities. (p. 8)

Action

- ✓ District Health Authorities Act provides for new, well-defined roles of Community Health Boards in planning local health care priorities.

Commitment

Establish within the Department of Health the position of Nursing Policy Advisor, working with the Deputy Minister. The Nursing Policy Advisor will be responsible for working with the profession in developing effective strategies to retain, recruit and retrain nurses. (p. 7)

Action

- ✓ Nursing Policy Advisor has been hired and is working with employers, educators, professional associations, unions and the Department of Health on issues affecting the nursing profession.

Commitment

Provide nursing students who agree to work in Nova Scotia with bursaries covering up to 50 per cent of their tuition costs. (p. 7)

Action

- ✓ 1999-2000 bursaries offered to 37 fourth-year nursing students. Funding available to licensed practical nurses (LPN) for refresher program and pharmacy course. The 2000-01 budget provides funding for 25 nursing graduate bursaries.

Commitment

Provide, as our first priority, the core funding required to establish the additional equivalent of 100 full-time nursing positions. (pp. 3 and 6)

Action

- ✓ October 1999 budget provided funding for nurses. Since the new government assumed office, over 150 casual positions have been converted to full-time.

Commitment

Immediately commit to increase the number of nurse training seats. (p. 6)

Action

- ✓ Government continues to provide the funding required to maintain the 75 additional nurse training seats announced by the previous administration.
- ✓ The 2000-01 budget includes \$1 million to fund new seats, with additional monies earmarked for future years.

Commitment

Support professional development opportunities that recognize the increasing complexity and specialization of nursing care, including developing nurse practitioner legislation. (p. 7)

Action

- ✓ Amendments to the Pharmacy Act were passed that will allow nurse practitioners (part of the Primary Care pilot project) to prescribe routine medications.
- ✓ The 2000-01 budget includes \$150,000 for the Dalhousie University Nurse Practitioner Program. Funding will be provided in each of the next three years.

Commitment

Provide bursaries covering 50 per cent of the cost of tuition for medical students who agree to practise in underserved areas of Nova Scotia. (p. 7)

Action

- ✓ Budget 2000 included funding for bursaries to cover up to 50 per cent of the cost of tuition for medical students who agree to set up their practice in currently under-served areas. The Department of Health, the Dalhousie Medical Students Association, the Professional Association of Interns and Residents and counterparts in other provinces are discussing specific program proposals.

Commitment

Appoint a task force with representation from Nova Scotia's research centres, universities and medical institutions to identify strategies to develop new medical and health-related opportunities that will both enhance the delivery of health care to Nova Scotians and create new employment opportunities. (p. 9)

Action

- ✓ Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation was established in January 2000. It will invest approximately \$5 million in health research to assist, collaborate with and fund individuals and organizations conducting health research in the province. More than 50 Nova Scotia health researchers will receive funding over the next two years.

Commitment

Establish appropriate criteria for determining the number of beds necessary to provide an adequate level of hospital and nursing home care in each community. (p. 7)

Action

- ✓ Government established an ad hoc committee of stakeholders representing the continuing care sector to establish criteria for determining the number of long-term care beds.
- ✓ The Clinical Services Plan now in progress will establish criteria for acute care beds.

Commitment

In partnership with health care providers, immediately undertake a comprehensive assessment of all health care facilities in order to ensure that Nova Scotians are receiving the right type of care in the appropriate facility. (p. 8)

Action

- ✓ Health facilities review completed. The Department of Health continues to gather and analyze information that supports evidence-based health care. Both initiatives, along with information gathered through the Provincial Health Council's core services review, will help shape the Clinical Services Plan now in progress.

Commitment

Conduct a thorough audit of the cost and clinical outcomes of providing ground ambulance service in the province and seek advice to determine the government's legal obligations with respect to its contract with Emergency Medical Care. (p. 9)

Action

- ✓ Interim audit of EMC's financial performance undertaken. Drafting terms of reference for second audit of ambulance operations and value for money.

Commitment

Conduct an independent review of the Environmental Health Clinic to ensure that programs and services are meeting the health needs of Nova Scotians who have environmental illness. (p. 9)

Action

- ✓ Review team appointed. Completed on-site visit and surveys; drafting report.

Commitment

Mandate the Provincial Health Council to hold province-wide public consultations to develop a list of core clinical services that must be provided at the community, regional and provincial levels and to develop a Patient's Bill of Rights for approval by government. (p. 7)

Action

- ✓ Provincial Health Council conducted public consultations and submitted a report to the Minister in March 2000. The Council is now drafting a follow-up report on health issues and concerns. Council also drafted an Expectations Document on the level of care Nova Scotians should expect from their health care system.

Commitment

Dedicate a portion of the tobacco tax to fund new health promotion and disease prevention initiatives, including programs designed to discourage tobacco and other substance abuse among youth. (p. 9)

Action

- ✓ \$450,000 has been dedicated to implementing a Comprehensive Tobacco Reduction Strategy.

Commitment

Support family care givers by committing \$1 million to the expansion of respite services. (p. 9)

Action

- ✓ The October 1999 budget included an additional \$500,000 for respite services for the remaining six months of 1999.
- ✓ The 2000-01 budget contains \$1 million to expand adult day programs and respite for care givers.

Commitment

Undertake a comprehensive review of the delivery of mental health services, particularly as they relate to child and adolescent mental health. (p. 9)

Action

- ✓ Review completed on May 31, 2000 and publicly released on June 15. Review findings will be used in the development of the Clinical Services Plan.

Commitment

Introduce legislation governing Medical Laboratory Technologists. (p. 8)

Action

- ✓ Legislation passed in the spring of 2000.

Commitment

Commit \$2 million towards efforts to reduce assessment wait-times and to provide early treatment for children believed to have autism or pervasive developmental delay. (p. 9)

Action

- ✓ 2000-01 budget included a \$2 million commitment dedicated to autism spectrum disorders. New community-based early identification and intervention service (EIIS) model announced on June 6, 2000.

Commitment

Work towards the full integration of Health and Community Services programs, particularly as they relate to the delivery of primary care and continuing care, so that appropriate and early interventions can be taken to prevent unnecessary costs to the system. (p. 23)

Action

- ✓ All programs for seniors—many of which were previously under the jurisdiction of the Department of Community Services—are now the responsibility of the Department of Health. This is a critical step in the move to a single-entry access system for continuing care, which is now well under way.

Education, the Foundation

"A strong education system is the foundation of an economy of sustained growth. Government will dedicate itself to an education system which is adequately funded, fully focused on the student and the classroom which will prepare young Nova Scotians to compete in the job markets of today and tomorrow." (*Strong Leadership ... a clear course*, p. 15)

Commitment

Immediately establish a task force with broad geographic representation that will hold public hearings on existing school board boundaries and make recommendations for amending existing school board boundaries so they properly reflect reasonable community input. (p. 16)

Action

- ✓ School Board Boundary Review Task Force established. Public consultations held. Report submitted to government in February 2000. In June 2000, government established new governance model for South West School Board.

Commitment

Establish by law or regulation a uniform, province-wide standard for primary classes on the basis of five days a week. (pp. 5 and 16)

Action

- ✓ Government continues to honour the July 5, 1999 decision to offer primary in every school in the province.

Commitment

Ensure that allocation of resources is done fairly so that students across Nova Scotia have equitable access to comparable equipment, supplies and learning aids. (p. 16)

Action

- ✓ The P3 school construction program increased the gap between those schools that have and those that don't. The government has announced it will once again finance and own schools. Additionally, schools will be designed and built according to modern and standard design criteria—ensuring the more equitable use of education dollars.
- ✓ Government recently announced that it will maximize bulk purchasing arrangements for school textbooks and software resources. Savings realized from bulk purchases will be reinvested in student resource materials to meet needs in targeted areas.

Commitment

Ensure that our education system reflects the diverse nature of Nova Scotia's communities. (p. 16)

Action

- ✓ Amendments to the Education Act provide for an African Canadian seat on Nova Scotia's school boards.

Commitment

Establish a special Capital Improvement Fund, administered by the School Capital Construction Committee, to respond to emergency health problems in our schools. (p. 16)

Action

- ✓ 2000-01 budget contains approximately \$20 million in additional funding for school renovations.
- ✓ In rejecting the P3 school construction process, Education Minister Jane Purves announced that the School Capital Construction Committee will be re-instated and asked to provide government with recommendations related to the most urgent priorities for school renovations.

Commitment

Work to expand opportunities that enable transition for pre-graduate high school students who wish to pursue vocational trades.

Action

- ✓ The Nova Scotia Community College is working with several provincial school boards to implement pre-college training programs starting at grade 11. This initiative is designed to keep high school students in school by providing vocational training opportunities as alternatives to university. MOUs have been signed with Southwest and Chignecto school boards.

Commitment

Track employment opportunities and provide information to guidance counselors in a timely way. (p. 16)

Action

- ✓ Nova Scotia work information website was launched in May 2000. This is a valuable clearinghouse of labour market information for teachers, guidance counselors, human resource personnel and others.
- ✓ Government is also analyzing the feasibility of including Nova Scotia in the national careers resource clearinghouse website.

Commitment

Ensure that all teachers are given the professional development opportunities they need to effectively implement curriculum changes and new teaching methodology and technology. (p. 16)

Action

- ✓ Recently announced teacher certification requirements call for 100 hours of professional development training during each five-year period. As well, professional development provisions, as contained in the certification changes, will be reviewed after three years to ensure they are achieving effective results.

Commitment

Doubling the existing Civil Service Career Start Program to provide graduating university students with opportunities for work experience with the provincial government. (p. 17)

Action

- ✓ Funding provided in the 2000-01 budget, with the program now open to qualified candidates.

Rebuilding Our Economy

"It is government's role to establish an economic and regulatory environment that encourages the private sector and facilitates economic growth and job creation. We believe that Nova Scotians are looking for long-term employment opportunities that will enable them to enjoy Nova Scotia's quality of life. We believe that these can and should best be provided by the private sector. We believe that it is the role of government to put in place programs and an environment that encourages and supports Nova Scotian entrepreneurs."
(*Strong Leadership ... a clear course*, p. 10)

Commitment

Streamline the Department of Economic Development so it focuses on infrastructure, training and marketing, rather than on simply passing out grants, loans and loan guarantees. (p. 11)

Action

- ✓ The Economic Growth Strategy discussion paper released in early spring focuses on the three elements of infrastructure, training and marketing as outlined in *Strong Leadership ... a clear course*. Additionally, government's reorganization efforts will build on the same focus, for example, the Labour Market Secretariat will rest in Economic Development.
- ✓ The October 1999 budget cut the Department's Investment and Special Assistance fund by 55 per cent (over \$9.5 million).
- ✓ The October 1999 budget cut the Department's Lending and Financing Services fund by 82 per cent (over \$14.8 million).
- ✓ The 2000-01 budget of the Economic Development Department has been reduced by 45 per cent.

Commitment

Convene public Economic Round Table sessions with cabinet, business, labour, municipal, community and educational leaders to identify priority issues and develop co-operative strategies to achieve sustained economic growth. (p. 12)

Action

- ✓ Round table sessions were held to elicit public input on the government's Economic Growth Strategy discussion paper. Opinions are being incorporated into the final strategy report.

Commitment

Establish a Buy Nova Scotia First program, an aggressive multi-media marketing campaign to increase consumer awareness of Nova Scotian products and services. (p. 12)

Action

- ✓ The 2000-01 budget includes \$400,000 to implement the Buy Nova Scotia First program.
- ✓ A number of government departments are now working with the private sector and community stakeholders on developing a comprehensive web portal that will bring together the province's marketing resources. The website will also include a comprehensive directory of export development and e-commerce websites.

Commitment

As part of the Buy Nova Scotia First program, actively promote Nova Scotia's Arts/Craft Industry as an integral and important sector of our economy. (p. 12)

Action

- ✓ The web portal being developed will be used to promote and sell Nova Scotia products, particularly crafts, online.

Commitment

Aggressively market new initiatives that demonstrate that industrial Cape Breton is much more economically diverse than many believe. (p. 14)

Action

- ✓ The 2000-01 budget includes \$500,000 for a new marketing initiative for Cape Breton. Also, when fully operational, the Buy Nova Scotia First program will include a focus on Cape Breton products.

Commitment

Implement policies/measures such as tax incentives that recognize and respond to the need for stimulating the economies of rural Nova Scotia. (p. 12)

Action

- ✓ Increased the Film Industry Tax Credit to 35 per cent in rural Nova Scotia from 32.5 per cent.
- ✓ Established a \$1.5 million revolving loan fund to help Nova Scotia's boatbuilding industry expand into the pleasure craft business.
- ✓ The 2000-01 budget includes an additional \$250,000 to help market cultural strengths.

- ✓ The 2000-01 budget contains an additional \$9 million for paving rural Nova Scotia's secondary roads.
- ✓ Government continues to provide a Community Economic Development Tax Credit.

Commitment

Vigorously promote Nova Scotia as a film, video and multi-media production location, with tax credits and policies that are comparable to those in other jurisdictions, and remove the asset cap placed on the tax credit. (p. 12)

Action

- ✓ Asset cap has been removed. Credit in rural Nova Scotia increased to 35 per cent from 32.5 per cent. Cap reduced in metro to 30 per cent from 32.5 per cent.

Commitment

Actively work to ensure that all parts of Nova Scotia benefit from offshore gas and oil exploration and development by establishing an Energy Council of experts to advise Cabinet on the development of Nova Scotia's Offshore. (p. 13)

Action

- ✓ Premier announced the framework and membership of Council in June. Council has had its first meeting.

Commitment

Ensure that all mining regulations are clear, efficient and effective regarding safety and environmental practices, monitoring, assessments, permitting, inspection and enforcement. (p. 29)

Action

- ✓ On October 12, Natural Resources Minister Ernie Fage tabled Bill 12 to strengthen and clarify the Mineral Resources Act in accordance with recommendations made by the Westray Inquiry. It passed third reading on November 16.

Commitment

Ensure that the federal government clearly defines who is eligible to participate in the native food fishery. (p. 28)

Action

- ✓ The Premier and Ministers for Aboriginal Affairs and Fisheries and Aquaculture have repeatedly urged the federal government to promptly introduce an action plan for a regulated fishery that is fair to native and non-native fishermen.

Commitment

Immediately meet with representatives of Nova Scotia's fishing sector to establish a more effective joint process for advocating on behalf of the industry with the Government of Canada. (p. 18)

Action

- ✓ Last fall, following a meeting with fish harvesting and processing groups, Fisheries and Aquaculture Minister Ernie Fage announced the provincial government's support of principles adopted by the Atlantic Fishermen's Alliance, namely that conservation must be the first priority of fisheries management and that there must be only one fish management authority—the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans.

Commitment

Aggressively represent Nova Scotian fishing interests to Ottawa. (p. 28)

Action

- ✓ On September 23, the Nova Scotia government signed a new agreement with the Government of Canada and all provinces on inter-jurisdictional cooperation.

Commitment

Tackle the growing problem of illegal fishing by strengthening fisheries enforcement efforts. (p. 28)

Action

- ✓ The 2000–01 budget contained an additional \$125,000 for fisheries enforcement.

Commitment

Insist that the Government of Canada provide drought assistance to Nova Scotia farmers in accordance with the needs of Nova Scotia farmers. (p. 27)

Action

- ✓ At the Annual Premiers' Conference in Quebec City, Premier Hamm urged all premiers to unanimously endorse the province's position that the federal government must cooperate with the provinces to improve access to federal disaster relief.
- ✓ The 2000–01 budget contains more than \$1.9 million to realize this commitment.
- ✓ The Province negotiated a new safety net program that provides for a 50 per cent increase in funding for farmers.

Commitment

Establish a New Farm Entrants Program to encourage young Nova Scotians to continue the tradition of family farming in Nova Scotia, through low-interest loans. (p. 27)

Action

- ✓ \$600,000 is provided in the 2000-01 budget. The program, administered through the Nova Scotia Farm Loan Board, is now operational.

Commitment

Strengthen the partnership between the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture and Marketing and together develop programs to ensure the sustainability of the agricultural sector. (p. 27)

Action

- ✓ On October 27, Agriculture Minister Ernie Fage tabled Bill 10, the Farm Practices Act, the need for which was identified by the Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture, and invited public input until early 2000. Farm Practices Act was passed during the spring session.

Commitment

Re-establish the Department of Tourism and Culture as a separate department of government whose mandate includes promotion of museums, parks and historic homes. (p. 15)

Action

- ✓ The government established the Department of Tourism and Culture as a separate department to enhance the unparalleled growth experienced by these two key industries.

Commitment

Commit to no more toll highways. (p. 25)

Action

- ✓ Former Transportation and Public Works Minister Gordon Balser advised federal Transport Minister David Collenette in writing that Nova Scotia supports a ban on future toll highways.

Commitment

Demand that the federal government return a significant portion of the roughly \$125 million in fuel taxes it collects annually in Nova Scotia as a contribution to our highway strategy. (p. 26)

Action

- ✓ Premier John Hamm has used both the Annual Premiers' Conference and the Council of Maritime Premiers to join with his colleagues to unanimously endorse a national infrastructure program, with emphasis on highway improvements. The low return by Ottawa on federal fuel taxes is always highlighted.
- ✓ The Department of Transportation and Public Works has made a formal request to the Government of Canada to return a greater portion of fuel taxes for infrastructure and has re-iterated the need for federal funding for highways in the current fiscal year (2000-01).

Commitment

Aggressively market Nova Scotia's products abroad. (p. 12)

Action

- ✓ Last fall, Premier John Hamm's participation on a Team Canada mission to Japan helped secure a five-year educational exchange between St. Mary's University and Japan's Josai University.
- ✓ In November, City Links Trade Mission to New England generated deals projected to generate over \$4.5 million for rural Nova Scotia enterprises.
- ✓ In May, Premier Hamm again participated in Team Canada Atlantic, which generated new business opportunities for companies from throughout the province.

Commitment

Work with municipalities and the federal government to fund essential infrastructure projects such as water and sewer services. (p. 21)

Action

- ✓ Five projects totalling \$676,000 under the Capital Assistance Program were approved in September 1999.
- ✓ In August 1999, Premier John Hamm used the Annual Premiers' Conference in Quebec City to highlight the need for a new national infrastructure program, a position endorsed unanimously by all premiers and territorial leaders.
- ✓ Department of Housing and Municipal Affairs is now negotiating with the federal government to access Nova Scotia's share of infrastructure funding announced in this year's federal budget.

Building Better, More Efficient and Accountable Government

"Government will live within its means. By spending responsibly, we will protect our ability to guarantee priorities like health care and education for the future."
(*Strong Leadership ... a clear course*, p. 18)

Commitment

Eliminate deficit financing and restore fiscal openness by keeping one set of books. (p. 18)

Action

- ✓ On September 27, 1999, Finance Minister Neil LeBlanc released consolidated financial statements for the 1998–99 fiscal year, consistent with new, modern and Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).
- ✓ The October 1999 budget reconfirmed the use of GAAP for all future fiscal years.
- ✓ The 2000–01 budget reaffirmed government's commitment to improving financial accountability with amendments to the Financial Measures Act, which includes new accountability measures and modern accounting methods for Tangible Capital Assets.

Commitment

Implement legislation requiring all new program costs to be approved from identified departmental budgets. (p. 18)

Action

- ✓ This provision was implemented with the Financial Measures Act and became law on June 8, 2000.

Commitment

Repatriate the debts owed to foreign lenders. (p. 18)

Action

- ✓ As of March 31, ²⁰⁰⁰1999, exposure is 36 per cent—down from 72 per cent in 1995 and 50 per cent in 1999. Without any further management-induced changes, it will be 20 per cent or less by 2004.

Commitment

No more tax dollars for Sysco. (p. 3)

Action

- ✓ Agreement was reached to sell Sysco to a private-sector operator, Duferco, pending conclusion of pension and contract agreements. Failing a sale, government will proceed to liquidation.

Commitment

Conduct a thorough, open cost-benefit analysis of the decision to withdraw from Atlantic Lotto to ensure that it is in the best interests of Nova Scotians. (p. 19)

Action

- ✓ On September 21, Finance Minister Neil LeBlanc announced that a senior official from the Department of Business and Consumer Services, with extensive experience in lotto and gaming regulation, will head up the review of the decision to withdraw from the Atlantic Lottery Corporation.
- ✓ Government renegotiated a new and far better deal for Nova Scotia and has recently signed a new partnership agreement with the Atlantic provinces that will see Nova Scotia remain within Atlantic Lotto.

Commitment

Undertake a comprehensive review and cost-benefit analysis of the P3 process and contracts to ensure that only the best possible approach is used in school construction, renovation and operation. (pp. 5 and 16)

Action

- ✓ The review has been completed. Government has announced that it will not be proceeding with the P3 model for future school construction, citing cost overruns and more modern accounting policies that do not favour private ownership of our schools.

Commitment

Amend the Freedom of Information Act to appoint the FOIPOP Review Officer on a full-time basis and to require full disclosure of public-private partnering agreements, including school construction. (pp. 5 and 19)

Action

- ✓ On November 3, Justice Minister Michael Baker tabled Bill 14 to amend the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act as promised. On November 18, Bill 14 was passed.

Commitment

Undertake a comprehensive review of the compensation program for victims of institutional abuse to ensure the process is fair and upholds the rights of both the victims and the accused. (p. 22)

Action

- ✓ Justice Fred Kaufman was appointed in November 1999 to carry out the review, which is expected to take 15 months.

Commitment

Establish and enforce a Code of Conduct for Cabinet Ministers and senior public servants. (pp. 5 and 19).

Action

- ✓ The Code of Conduct for Cabinet Ministers was introduced in fall of 1999 and legislation introduced in the spring of 2000. The Code of Conduct for senior civil servants is being finalized.

Commitment

Reduce the size of government, starting with Cabinet. (p. 19)

Action

- ✓ Cabinet of 12 (including Premier) is smaller than the cabinet of previous government (14, including Premier). That also resulted in fewer executive assistants, and a reduced staff in the Office of Premier.
- ✓ In April the Premier announced one of the most aggressive restructuring initiatives ever undertaken in Nova Scotia, with the number of departments, agencies and secretariats being reduced to 14 from 21.

Commitment

Immediately initiate a review of all government programs with a view to eliminating those that cannot be justified on the basis of necessity, cost and efficiency. Every single dollar spent by government must benefit Nova Scotians. (p. 19)

Action

- ✓ On September 20, Finance Minister Neil LeBlanc announced an internal program analysis to look at all government programs, their costs, their relevance today, and possible alternatives.
- ✓ On October 20, Premier John Hamm announced that Voluntary Planning will conduct an external review of all government programs through the establishment of an independent fiscal task force to consult all Nova Scotians.

- ✓ Charting the Course—the framework of program analysis—provided government's first detailed inventory of program spending, identifying programs for elimination, reduction and enhancement.

Commitment

Undertake a review of services that can be more efficiently and cost-effectively provided by the private sector, while ensuring appropriate standards are maintained and our commitment to the NSGEU on private-sector partnering is maintained. (p. 19)

Action

- ✓ Government has announced its intention to sell Nova Scotia Resources Limited.
- ✓ Government is now examining the merits of privatizing either in whole or in part the Nova Scotia Liquor Commission.
- ✓ The 2000-01 budget announced that government will no longer own its own bookstore, that it would seek private-sector management of its three resorts and that it would relinquish control of Northumberland Golf Course.
- ✓ Discussions with the NSGEU regarding privatization are under way.

Commitment

Initiate a review of all government buildings, with a view to reducing costs by eliminating surplus office space and conduct a comprehensive energy audit. (p. 19)

Action

- ✓ 23 of 25 Crown-owned buildings have been reviewed and the space assessment review is 85 per cent complete. Final report is due in September 2000.
- ✓ Phase one of energy audit to be completed by fall of 2000.

Social Fairness, Justice and Public Safety

Commitment

Remove the grandfather clause imposed on the Property Tax Rebate program which unfairly provides some seniors with municipal property tax relief, while denying it to others. All seniors who apply and meet program guidelines will receive property tax assistance. (*Strong Leadership ... a clear course*, p. 24)

Action

- ✓ Program now open to all qualifying seniors based on a four-year phase-in.

Commitment

Immediately establish an independent process for setting public prosecutors' salaries and work to implement initiatives that will lead to a more positive work environment as outlined in the Kaufman Report. (p. 22)

Action

- ✓ A working group was established to develop an independent salary-setting mechanism for Crown attorneys. This was accepted by government and the Nova Scotia Crown Attorneys Association in February 2000.

Commitment

The government will not subsidize the natural gas companies. (p. 20)

Action

- ✓ Government continues to support the current policy. No direct subsidies exist, nor are any planned.

Commitment

Protect retail gasoline dealers from downloading national advertising costs by major multi-national oil companies. (p. 25)

Action

- ✓ This was implemented through a regulatory amendment on October 27, 1999.

Commitment

Stop construction of the Correctional Forensic Facility in residential Bedford and find a suitable non-residential site following consultation. (p. 22)

Action

- ✓ The Correctional Forensic Facility is under construction in a non-residential site in the Burnside Industrial Park. This site was selected following consultation with the affected communities.

Commitment

Government will join the effort by other provinces, including Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, North West Territories, Yukon, Nunavut, New Brunswick and Ontario in legally challenging the federal government's gun control legislation. (p. 21)

Action

- ✓ Nova Scotia was granted intervener status in a case heard before the Supreme Court of Canada in February 2000.

Commitment

Through local police forces and RCMP across the province, initiate and implement a program to educate seniors on how to effectively deal with situations where they consider their safety at risk. (p. 25)

Action

- ✓ The Community Outreach Program was launched. Police are distributing educational videos that offer tips on home safety.

Commitment

Respond to the concerns of many Nova Scotians, particularly seniors, who are growing increasingly concerned about living safely at home, by pursuing stiffer sentences for home invasion as outlined in legislation already introduced. (p. 24)

Action

- ✓ At a national meeting of Justice Ministers in Vancouver in January, Justice Minister Michael Baker called on his provincial and federal counterparts to establish a new offence under the Criminal Code for home invasions. His recommendation received widespread support and is now being considered by a team of senior federal and provincial officials.
- ✓ In April, Justice Minister Michael Baker released guidelines to assist Crown attorneys in preparing to prosecute home invasion cases.
- ✓ Government also established a new community outreach program with an instructional video to remind seniors, youth and women how to live safely at home.

Commitment

In keeping with our belief that "justice delayed is justice denied," look for efficiencies to help streamline our justice system. (p. 22)

Action

- ✓ Last November, Justice Minister Michael Baker tabled Bill 25, the Justice Administration Act, to improve the administration of justice by making necessary modifications to a variety of existing legislation. The bill received Royal Assent on November 23, 1999.
- ✓ In July, the Minister of Justice announced the implementation of a new system to control the purchase of legal services from the private sector. It will ensure a co-ordinated approach to the procurement of legal services and will feature a tracking system to ensure that government is getting the best value for taxpayers' dollars.

Commitment

Ensure the Senior Citizens' Secretariat is given the necessary resources to carry out its mandate, with a commitment to meet regularly with representative seniors' groups to ensure the concerns of seniors are addressed. (p. 24)

Action

- ✓ The 2000-01 budget contains an additional \$165,000.

Commitment

Support the continuation of Community Action Programs for Children. (p. 23)

Action

- ✓ The Department of Community Services supports this program through partnerships, with funding available to continue support.

Commitment

Ensure that day care subsidies are portable and are attached to the child, not the facility. (p. 23)

Action

- ✓ The 2000-01 budget included funding for 100 new day care seats, half of which will be portable spaces targeted to remove employment barriers for single parents.

Commitment

In cooperation with the Trucking Association of Nova Scotia and the Atlantic Provinces' Truckers Association, work to enhance highway safety and education.
(p. 26)

Action

- ✓ In December 1999 Cabinet approved new regulations to direct funds paid to the Workers Compensation Board Accident Fund into programs that support safety training initiatives carried out by Nova Scotia's trucking industry.

